

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T TEL AVIV 10247

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, PGOV, PROG, LE, IS, UN
SUBJECT: 1949 ARMISTICE AGREEMENT BETWEEN LEBANON AND ISRAEL

REF: A) BEIRUT 4571; B) BEIRUT 4541; C) STATE 198365;
D) TEL AVIV 5383

1. DAYAN FIRST BROACHED SUBJECT OF 1949 ARMISTICE AGREEMENT IN A CONVERSATION WE HAD APRIL 20 (REF C). HE NOTED THAT WALDHEIM HAD TOLD HIM THAT THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS THE AGREEMENT TO BE IN FORCE. DAYAN EXPRESSED HIS WILLINGNESS TO PUT THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE ARMISTICE REGIME, SUCH AS ILMAC, INTO OPERATION, SUGGESTING ILMAC COULD BE A USEFUL FORUM FOR ISRAELI-LEBANESE CONTACTS. IN HIS VIEW, THE GOI HAD UNWISELY ANNOUNCED IN 1967 THAT THE 1949 ARMISTICE AGREEMENT WAS NO LONGER IN EFFECT; HOWEVER, SINCE THE UN AND GOL REGARDED IT AS STILL LEGALLY IN FORCE, HE WOULD LIKE TO DO SO AS WELL.

2. DESPITE BOUTROS' SUSPICIONS OF ISRAELI TRAP,
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DAYAN QUERY THROUGH UN SYG CLEARLY SOMETHING HE HAS HAD ON HIS MIND FOR SEVERAL MONTHS AND NOT NECESSARILY SOMETHING COOKED UP IN CONNECTION WITH THE CURRENT IMBROGLIO IN SOUTH LEBANON. BOUTROS MAY NOT WANT TO BRING ATTENTION AT THIS TIME TO THIS WHOLE ISSUE BY THE SORT OF EXPLICIT RECONFIRMATION SOUGHT BY DAYAN, HOWEVER, BOUTROS MIGHT WANT TO TAKE ANOTHER CLOSE LOOK AT THE

AGREEMENT AND CONSIDER A RESPONSE ALONG THE LINE SUGGESTED BY AMBASSADOR PARKER IN REF A; I.E., THAT AS FAR AS THE GOL IS CONCERNED, THE ARMISTICE AGREEMENT NEVER LAPSED.

3. PRIOR TO ENTRY OF UNIFIL INTO PICTURE, ILMAC WAS SEEN HERE AS WORSE THAN USELESS IN ITS ONE-SIDEDNESS. IT APPLIED ONLY TO ISRAELI ACTIONS, AS THE ARMED ELEMENTS ON THE LEBANESE SIDE OF THE BORDER -- THE PALESTINIANS -- WERE NOT A PARTY TO THE AGREEMENT. THUS, ILMAC COULD ONLY HAVE EFFECT OF TYING ISRAEL'S HANDS, WHILE LEAVING UNTOUCHED THE FREEDOM OF ACTION OF ARMED PALESTINIAN GROUPS NORTH OF THE BORDER. THE ENTIRE ILMAC FRAMEWORK WAS CONSIDERED AS IRRELEVANT IN VIEW OF PALESTINIAN USURPATION OF LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY IN THE SOUTH.

4. WITH THE APPEARANCE OF UNIFIL ON THE SCENE AND ADVENT OF PRESENT REALITY THAT PALESTINIANS DO NOT HAVE FREE RUN IN THE SOUTH, DAYAN'S EVALUATION OF ILMAC'S UTILITY HAS OBVIOUSLY BEEN REVISED AOTHOUGH WE CANNOT CERTIFY THAT DAYAN HAS NO ULTERIOR MOTIVES, IT IS NOW POSSIBLE FOR GOI TO CONCEIVE OF ILMAC ONCE AGAIN SERVING ITS ORIGINAL PURPOSE, AS WELL AS OFFERING A USEFUL FORUM FOR DIRECT ISRAELI-LEBANESE CONTACT -- ONE IN WHICH UNIFIL'S INTRUSIVENESS IS MINIMIZED AS IT IS FITTED INTO A PRE-EXISITING BILATERAL FRAMEWORK. AND, MIRACLE OF MIRACLES, IF LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY WAS RESTORED TO SOUTH LEBANON, AND THE
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PALESTINIANS WERE CONTROLLED BY GOL, ILMAC'S PERCEIVED UTILITY WOULD BE FURTHER ENHANCED.

5. THIS SUBJECT DID RISE IN SECRETARY'S MEETINGS HERE. BEGIN TOLD OF THEIR QUERY TO WALDHEIM AND ASKED SECRETARY TO DO WHAT HE COULD TO ASSIT. SECRETARY'S RESPONSE WAS NON-COMMITTAL.
LEWIS

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NNN

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